

# WORDS & VISION

UFV FACULTY AND STAFF ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER

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15

**Teresa Piper**

Status of Women Rep



Sign up for  
Discourse and  
Win Dinner

16

**Lisa Morry**

Communications Chair



6

Social Committee  
Chair

**Emily  
Major**



APRIL 2016



WORDS & VISION NEWSLETTER

IN THIS ISSUE

- 2 UFV's New President Needs to Know the Real Us
- 4 Solidarity? ... Whatever
- 5 Whose Vision of UFV?
- 6 New Voting Procedures Ensure Anonymity
- 8 Am I Native? Not yet.
- 9 Climbing the Learning Curve
- 10 Step on the Gas Already!
- 11 Two Years Passed by Quickly
- 12 Easter Egg Hunt a Big Hit!
- 13 Elections, Collective Agreement and AGM the Current Big Issues
- 14 Nego-bot: The Future of Contract Negotiations?
- 15 Successful International Women's Day Event
- 16 We have a prize for signing up for Discourse



UFV's New President Needs to Know the Real Us

Sean Parkinson | President

In my last article I mentioned the FSA would like our university president chosen through an open search. By an open search we mean that short-listed candidates should be invited to address the UFV community and meet directly with faculty, staff, students and community members. That is not going to happen. Boyden Global, the 'head hunter,' our Board has hired, recommended a closed search. With that our board chair has said the decision is made and that "the train has left the station." Since my last column, the issues with the presidential search are getting much bigger. I never thought the presidential search committee would be chosen in secret.

On February 18, I wrote to our board chair and asked to address the board executive about the benefits of an open search. My request was unanswered. Later that day we all received an email describing the procedures for presidential search, passed at Senate on February 12. That item is not on the Senate public agenda for February 12, but there is mention of an in-camera item so I assume the topic of presidential search was presented in-camera. This makes me nervous — Senate has "guidelines for in-camera meetings" on their website.

Within the procedures there will be a 13-member search committee. The student union gets two picks, the alumni association gets one pick, the community has no pick and the FSA has no representatives on the committee. You might think this an oversight but I have been informed there was much discussion and the board executive thought it best to keep "labour" out of the search for a president. The committee will have three faculty members and one staff member on the committee, to be chosen by Senate. Some of you would have received a call for volunteers on February 18, but it was not sent to all employees at that time. When the FSA learned of the call in a UFV-all bulletin, we sent out reminders to all of membership. The deadline for submissions was March 4.

The announcement of 13 committee members was made on March 31. Given the schedules of the Senate and the Senate Governance committee meetings, there must have been an in-camera extraordinary meeting of the SGC between March 4 and March 11 where the volunteers were chosen. The list of names must have been subsequently approved (in-camera, since it's not on the agenda) at Senate on March 11. I have confirmed that SGC did meet on March

8. There is no mention of this meeting on the Senate website. It appears we have governance bodies meeting in secret.

If we are going to have a closed search then shouldn't the process by which we choose the people to do the confidential work be transparent? Trust plays a fundamental role in predicting the success of a president — trust with the board; trust with employees; the trust of students; trust with external stakeholders and trust with the executive team. The start of building trust and confidence begins with the hiring process. Excluding the employee's representatives and the community from any meaningful input is not helpful

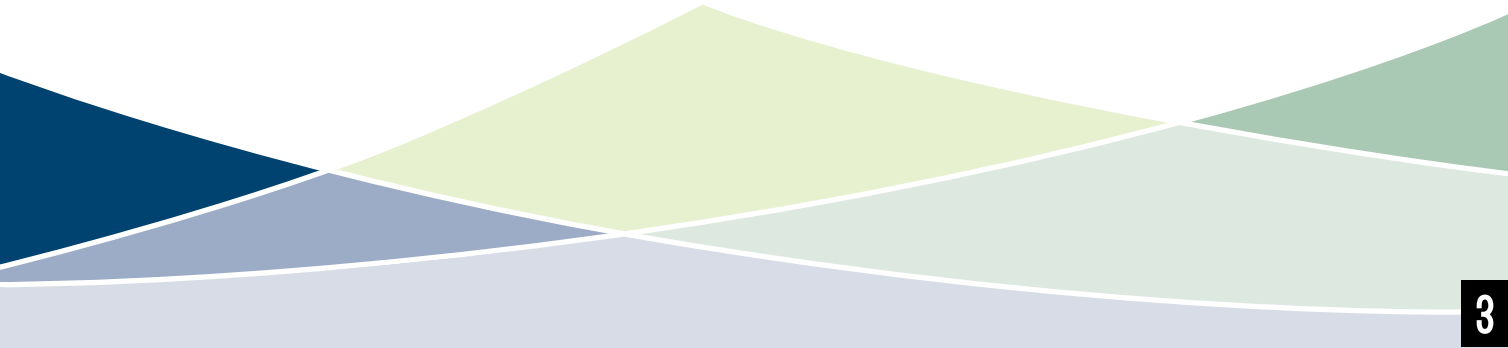
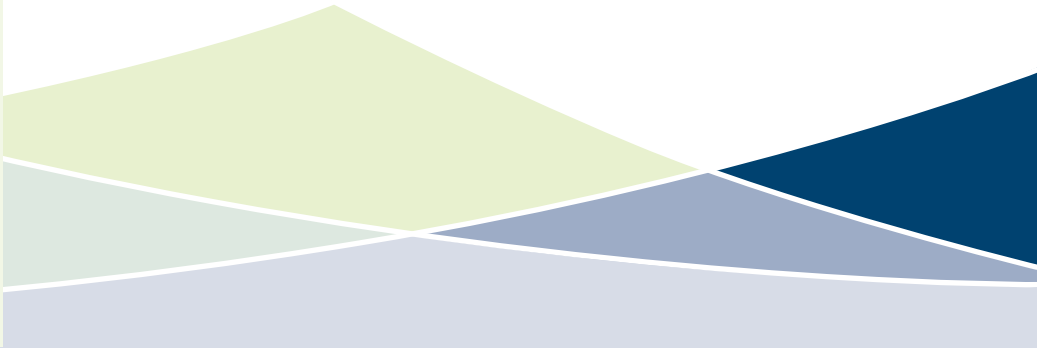
We had a chance to meet with two representatives of the executive search firm at a forum on April 4 for 'blue sky' thinking on what we want in our ideal president. I attended the forum and mentioned that the opportunity to provide input on the hiring criteria for the new president is not the same as informed comment after meeting the actual prospect. It takes an open search for members of the UFV community to adequately assess the qualifications, vision, and suitability of the short-listed candidates. We want to understand the applicant's own perception regarding their role as university president. Does he or she see themselves as our chief academic officer? external ambassador? corporate CEO? Each of these role perceptions plays a contributing factor to their role on campus, and how they would be viewed by stakeholders. Only with an open search will we all have an opportunity to assess this for ourselves. Talking with Boyden Global about the desired criteria is a much different exercise.

This goes both ways. The new president needs to know us. In a closed search how will the applicant come to appreciate the authentic view of UFV? Although I am sure it is the job of the executive search firm to communicate and fully inform and disclose concerns to applicants, the search firm would have to know the issues in order to



disclose them, for that to happen, the board would have to know the issues. And this could be a problem.

Universities are unusual workplaces and board members often share a lack of knowledge regarding university governance. While the board members might be apt governors, the complexities of collegial governance, university culture and the principles of academia seem to be less understood. I have offered on several occasions to speak with and work collaboratively with our board chair in an attempt to have the FSA recognized as a legitimate stakeholder at UFV. I remain hopeful the board will have real discussions with the FSA in the future. For now, they continue to hear an incomplete picture of the state of affairs at UFV. The question of full disclosure to prospective UFV presidential candidates remains unanswered.







## Solidarity? . . . Whatever

**John Carroll** | Chief Negotiator

I had great plans for my final contribution to *Words & Vision*. Certain that contract bargaining would be a distant memory by now, I indulged in fantasies about how I would leave behind priceless nuggets of wisdom mined from what I had learned serving in the union. But alas, sailing the rough seas of contract negotiation, I lost those precious nuggets, except for one. They were shipwrecked in the high seas of disappointment and sunk. Now, like the gems in Clarence's dream (in Richard III), they "[woo] the slimy bottom of the deep."

Oh well, I thought, I can at least provide a bargaining update . . . to a bargaining update . . . about bargaining updates. But then I thought, you've heard it all before.

In the back of my mind there was always the option of nostalgic reflection on the good old days; I could reissue the memes about how things at UFV have morphed for the worse. But to what purpose? Don't we all agree with Chicken Little? The sky is falling. Besides, the "good" in "good old days" wasn't always consistently good as some of us would have some of us believe.

So then, I reached the conclusion that there was nothing left but to bid a wistful sayonara, wish the best for everyone, and sign my name with "in solidarity."

Except, I wondered, what the hell do I mean by that? In solidarity.

You see, sometimes I have been, I admit, skeptical about the use of that word solidarity. I have doubted that in present practice the word means what it's supposed to mean. Isn't it supposed to mean . . . well, solidarity? And my experience has taught me that to achieve that

condition of us all working together for common goals—including equity and autonomy and professional excellence—it takes tremendous effort. Then I thought about how much human effort it will take for us to reach Alpha Centauri. And in a dark moment, I concluded, "Yeah, reach for the stars, baby, 'cause things ain't workin' too good back home."

But maybe effort isn't the right word. Maybe solidarity should be effort-less. In this sense: when I'm constantly looking over my shoulder at my colleagues and viewing them with bias, "desiring this man's art, and that man's scope," this effort not only distracts from the work I do, but also steals the power from the work we all can and must do together. That's a strategy we impose on ourselves. That's how we divide ourselves; that's how we're conquered.

So when I use the word, I want to really mean it. And I want others to mean it too. That's the one nugget I hold tight.

In solidarity,

John Carroll



## Whose Vision of UFV?

**Christina Neigel** | Faculty Vice President

Recently, I co-taught an interdisciplinary course with a colleague that focused on placemaking and community engagement. Students were given a lot of space to discuss their views, experiences and interpretation of UFV as a community. Students candidly revealed their cynicism about UFV as a "place." Turning their gaze towards UFV as a place for community building was a new experience for most of these students (most of whom were in the final term of their programs). Many admitted to only spending time on campus to attend classes, parachuting in and out, only as course timetabling required.

While I cannot generalize the experiences of these students to the broader UFV student population, their opinions about UFV are concerning. I worry that there are missed opportunities for students to use UFV as a place to build relationships, ideas, and networks that could support their endeavors in an uncertain and complex world. While my colleague and I are confident that we were somewhat successful in interrupting some student apathy, the experience has made me think carefully about the role of UFV's staff and faculty in the making of UFV as *place*.

The physical arrangements of our campuses can often impede the ways we interact. We have few formal spaces to congregate and even fewer spaces that *naturally* bring people together. Like the students we aim to support, we miss opportunities for spontaneous meet-ups that can enhance our sense of connectedness, help us to solve problems, and share information. The absence of such space can create feelings of alienation, promote individualistic behaviours, and stimulate competitiveness that may actually *depoliticize* (Preston & Aslett, 2014) our campuses. Yet, politicization is actually a fundamental element to higher education. Solving problems is about challenging assumptions—a practice that can be both productive and disruptive.

Faculty and staff are deeply connected to UFV campuses because of the time invested in these spaces. The way we circulate on campus influences the relationships that we have with one another and with students. When we retreat into our offices and, even, our classrooms, we limit our capacity to connect with those outside of our departments in ways that can exacerbate feelings of isolation and anxiety. Faced with a range of challenges including unresolved bargaining, elimination of programs, restructuring of workloads, layoffs, and opaque administrative decision-making, we risk being "picked off" one by one.

As members of the FSA, you are part of a critical stakeholder group at UFV. The UFV student experience is dependent on the continuity that you provide. Further, you are part of a body of people whose activities greatly contribute to UFV student experience. While diverse, these contributions require us to resist the urge to retreat into our sometimes problematic spaces so that we can confront our problems and seek out support when it is needed.

UFV has developed a vision for "Campus 2025" and in the *UFV 2025—A Vision for our Future* document (<https://www.ufv.ca/media/assets/provost/UFV-2025---A-Vision-for-our-Future-FINAL.pdf>) there is a notable emphasis on the important work of faculty and staff. Further, there is a call

for participation and feedback in the ongoing development of this plan. Interestingly, this process evolved into the development of the *2016-20 Education Plan* ([http://blogs.ufv.ca/ufv2025/files/2016/02/UFV-Education-Plan-Goals\\_FINAL.pdf](http://blogs.ufv.ca/ufv2025/files/2016/02/UFV-Education-Plan-Goals_FINAL.pdf)).

These documents suggest that community-wide and democratic processes were instituted in their development. While this might be debated, a larger concern is how achieving goals like "commit to flexibility and responsiveness" and "integrate experiential learning" are even possible in a climate where the constraints and tensions of the workplace go unacknowledged. This is particularly concerning when "each Council, department and unit (...) will be responsible for developing the strategies each area will focus on over the next 5 years" (UFV, 2016).

It is idealistic to believe that "learning drives the system and structure of the university, rather than the structure shaping the learning" (UFV Visioning, 2015, p. 10). UFV will continue to have structures (like a unionized workforce and problematic funding) that constrain the direction of this institution's evolution. We can find strength, however, in an honest appraisal of our limitations and expressing our stake in the future of this organization through inclusive and frequent interactions. After all, many of us are part of the same UFV community that it purports to serve.

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## New Voting Procedures Ensure Anonymity

**Michael Maschek** | Secretary-Treasurer

With the FSA AGM quickly approaching and the nomination process for new executives underway, I would like to review a few issues surrounding our election protocol.

First, in an effort to make the process more open, all nominations for elected offices will now be posted publicly at the time they are received. In the past, all nominations were published only once the deadline for receiving these nominations had passed. However, this convention was not based on any particular FSA policy and as a result individuals who asked about nominations prior to the deadline would be informed. It is not clear to me that members were aware this information was available upon request. Moving forward, in order to ensure all members have equal information regarding the process, nominations will be published online as they are received and the link to this location will be part of all communication with members regarding the nomination process. Current nominations may be found online at the following location:

<http://www.ufv-fsa.ca/about-us/annual-general-meeting/egms-and-by-elections/>

Second, our procedure for collecting electronic votes has been in violation of the Labour Relations Code, Section 39:

“All voting directed by the board or by the minister under this Code and other votes held by a trade union or employers’ organization of their respective members on a question of whether to strike or lock out, or whether to accept or ratify a proposed collective agreement, must be by secret ballot cast in such a manner that the person expressing a choice cannot be identified with the choice expressed.”

Multiple aspects of our current method of email voting violate the confidentiality requirement of this item. While our procedure for collecting paper ballots has been appropriate, relying only on paper ballots would likely result in low and uneven rates of member participation. The resources devoted towards a paper-only election would also be a very unappealing aspect of compliance in this manner. Furthermore, Appendix A of our Constitution and Bylaws requires electronic voting be administered:

“Association voting for annual elections, contract ratification, or possible job action will be administered both by paper ballot and electronically. Members will have the choice to vote electronically or with a paper ballot, but not both. All other votes including by-elections may be administered electronically.”

Strictly speaking, our election of executive members has not violated Section 39, as it relates only to strike or ratification votes. However, I see no reason why membership would want different levels of confidentiality for ratification votes as opposed to election of executive members. However, electronic voting had not been approved as compliant with Section 39 by the Labour Relations Board.

This past fall, the Thompson Rivers University Faculty Association (TRUFA) made a formal application to the BC Labour Relations Board to hold a strike vote online. In a precedent-setting ruling, TRUFA was granted this permission. Unfortunately, the ruling came too late for the implementation of the online vote and it was instead done by paper ballot. FPSE’s lawyer Leo McGrady made the application on behalf of TRUFA and even though the ruling was for TRUFA and for that single vote, it is now much easier for any other union to apply and be granted permis-

sion. (Please contact me if you would like to see a copy of the application to the LRB or the following decision by the board).

TRUFA has implemented its online voting using FluidSurveys; a product provided by a Canadian-based software company. Their experience has been positive. FluidSurveys preserves anonymity, prevents multiple votes and stores all data associated with its product on Canadian servers. Based on their experience and feedback following the LRB ruling, I have worked at implementing a similar protocol using the product for FSA electoral purposes. The FSA Finance and Administration committee approved the annual subscription to the product during its May meeting and used this system to hold our election for faculty contract administrator.

As a voting FSA member, the electoral process will remain pretty simple and straightforward. You will receive an email from [fsa.info@ufv.ca](mailto:fsa.info@ufv.ca). In the text of this email will be some instructions and a link that is associated with your unique electronic ballot. Simply click on the link and you will be taken to your ballot. Ballots are mobile-friendly, easily viewable from any desktop, phone or tablet. A sample ballot may be viewed through the following link:

<http://fluidsurveys.com/surveys/ufvfsa/sample-ballot-public-1/>

Complete the ballot and the link is destroyed. Importantly, each individual receives a unique link to their ballot; do not forward this email to any other individuals. Following submission of your ballot, you will see a screen confirming its acceptance. Reminders will be sent automatically to those who do not complete their ballots. These reminders will contain a link to your unique ballot. Only

those individuals who have not completed their ballots will be emailed reminders.

Only response data is collected. Specifically, the email address associated with the ballot, the unique link, the invite parameters, and the IP address of the submission are not stored. Unique links to ballots not submitted prior to the election window closing are automatically destroyed. A clickable email link will be both on the invite and on the ballot itself. If you have any issues or questions, please just click on that link and send me an email. If you require access to a computer in order to log into your email account, please let us know and we would be happy to provide access to one in the FSA office.

The election for faculty contract administrator was electronic-only (compliant with our policy, as this was a by-election; see above). I believe most paper-ballots cast during the past handful of elections was for the purpose of securing anonymity. I’m hoping that having this anonymity provided through the electronic ballot platform will eliminate demand for voting with a pencil. Eliminating paper ballots completely will require a constitutional change. If there remains a desire to have both paper and electronic ballots for future votes, we will likely implement the following procedure. First, an election window will be created in which polling stations are open and paper-ballots are accepted. When this window closes, a subsequent election window will open in which electronic ballots are accepted. Those individuals who cast a paper ballot will simply not receive a unique electronic ballot invite.

Finally, I’d like to address the way ballots look and the manner in which we count them. All balloting must be conducted as per the Faculty & Staff Association Policy on Voting Procedure (see Item 3.7 and Appendix A, FSA Constitution and Bylaws, 2015). Interestingly, this policy does not make explicit the manner in which voters complete ballots or the conditions for determining the election winner from these ballots. To date, we have maintained a first-past-the-post (FPTP) election criteria. Simply put, the candidate with the most votes wins. Procedural simplicity is often virtuous. However, implementation of this condition can be problematic when selecting from more

than two candidates.

The most frequent criticism of this condition is often referred to as the “spoiler effect.” In Canadian politics the condition is often referred to as “vote splitting.” As an illustration, consider three candidates running for any particular position. Two candidates are in favour of implementing a particular policy; the third is opposed. Let’s assume that this policy is the most significant issue over which votes are being cast and the three candidates are otherwise equally suited for the position. The election results in 60 percent of the votes cast for the two candidates in favour of the policy, split 25 percent for one candidate and 35 for the other. The remaining 40 percent of the votes are cast for the candidate opposed to the policy. The candidate opposed to the policy wins the FPTP election even though the majority of votes were cast for candidates in favour of the policy. Had one of those two candidates not run for the position, votes would likely swing (or transfer) to the other candidate in favour of the policy leading to a 60-40 victory.

One important alternative electoral system to FPTP is the single-transferable vote (STV) system (also referred to as instant run-off or rank-choice voting). In this system, each candidate on a ballot is ranked by the individual. If no candidate receives a majority of all first-place votes, the bottom-ranked alternative is eliminated and all first-place votes for that candidate are “transferred” to the candidate listed second on those ballots; similar reallocation occurs in later rounds as additional alternatives are eliminated until a majority winner emerges.

In the above example, the STV system would have first eliminated the candidate with only 25 percent of the votes. After elimination of the candidate, these votes would transfer to the other candidate in favour of the policy, assuming that individuals ranked that candidate as their second preference. This would result in the candidate who initially had 35 percent of the first-round votes to secure the election win.

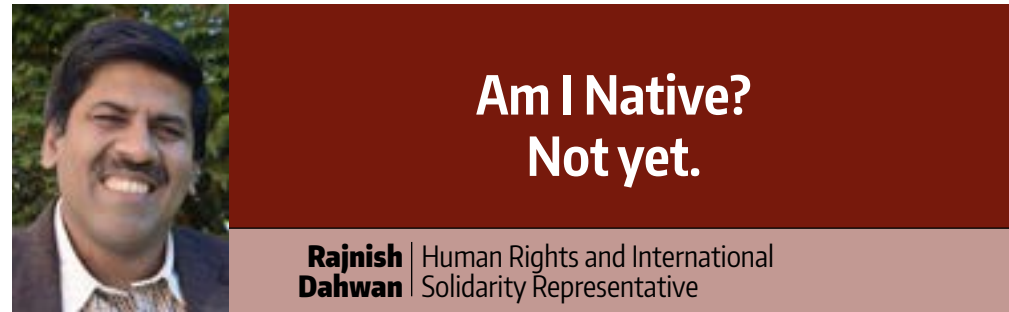
The spoiler effect is not the only criticism of the FPTP system. There are alternatives to FPTP that I think are worthy of membership’s consideration, not just STV. Each has virtues and faults; there is

no perfect system of protocols or conditions for determining an election winner. However, given that in recent FSA elections we have begun to see frequent situations with more than two candidates

“ There is no perfect system of protocols or conditions for determining an election winner. ”

running, I think it is time we engage in a discussion regarding these alternatives. I’m not certain the best way to proceed, but will begin by starting a thread on the FSA’s Discourse forum to facilitate a dialogue among those members who are interested in considering electoral reform.



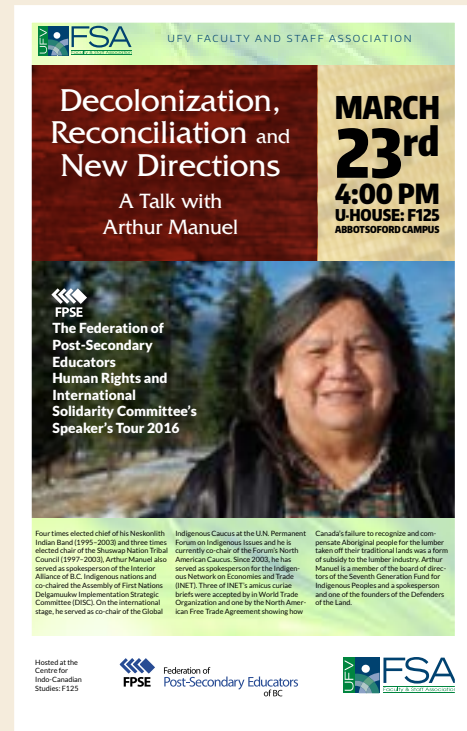


On ninth of April, overwhelmed by the number of attempted suicides in the community, the Attawapiskat First Nation on remote James Bay declared a state of emergency. On April 15th, as I sat down to write this article in response to our communications chair, Lisa's fervent appeal for material (I'm sorry Lisa, I have been too lazy) for *Words & Vision*, yet another teen from Attawapiskat tried to commit suicide. This is not the first time that this community has been in news for the wrong reasons. All the media reports seem to follow the narrative of this being an exception rather than a norm and as I listened to the news-anchors and subject experts on TV, I could not help thinking about a question that Arthur Manuel was asked during his talk at UFV: Have we come to a stage where all Canadians should consider themselves natives of Canada and work towards the establishment of Canadian identity that has elements of Indigenous narratives and symbols? Before I talk about Arthur's response to this question, let me provide a context to Arthur Manuel's visit to the UFV.

The Human Rights and International Solidarity committee organized a Federation of Post-Secondary Educators' sponsored speaker's tour for the year 2015-16 and the final leg of the tour brought First Nations author and activist Arthur Manuel to UFV. His talk, delivered to a capacity crowd at the Centre for Indo-Canadian studies, provided vital information centered on the topic chosen by the HRISC: Decolonization, Reconciliation and New Directions.

Arthur's response to the question "Are we all natives?" was one of perplexity and

there was a momentary pause in the proceedings as he struggled to find language to formulate his response. And when he did provide an answer, it might have created a sense of puzzlement among some audience members as to why he is so non-committal on accepting the notion that everyone who is a citizen of Canada



can be deemed to be the native of this country.

Later as I thought about this question and explored within to seek a response, I found that the connotation of the word native is markedly different for an immigrant like me, and the word does not invoke a re-

sponse that is in any way comparable to the response it would generate among a member of the Indigenous community. Calling myself a native, would imply for me, an attempt to cloak myself from the outside with a Canadian national identity, whereas for an Indigenous person, the notion of being native implies something inherent, something natural and something in the very essence of his or her being. This essence of being incorporates within itself not only the deep-seated connection with the meaning of the land, but also the twentieth century lived reality of being a native; the reality that includes the trauma of the residential schools, the assault on the native languages and cultures, broken homes, broken families and a broken link with the centuries old traditions. It will include living with constant neglect from the federal and provincial governments, lack of not only proper health and education services, but oftentimes something as basic as clean drinking water. Would I ever apply to immigrate to Canada if my destination was anything closer to a First Nations reserve? Certainly not. And that is why I can only be a native from the outside and am not yet ready to be one from the inside. However, over the last few years, thanks to efforts of people like Shirley Hardman, I have gained a little bit of an understanding of Indigenous language and culture and subsequently I do feel more Canadian than I felt when I took the oath of citizenship swearing allegiance to Queen Elizabeth II. Arthur Manuel's talk provided valuable information, which, if imbibed fully, can be a step towards the "nativization" of all Canadians.



Ahhh. Spring is in the air, the dogwoods are in bloom, and the FSA AGM is almost upon us, which means it's time to submit an annual report.

Going into this role, I knew quite a bit about professional development at UFV — I'm a regular user of the benefit, determined to claim every penny of PD funds available to me each year, and I'm also a supervisor with signing authority on PD requests. Nonetheless, my first year has still involved a learning curve, both as a committee co-chair, and as a member of the FSA executive.

For those of you not familiar with the committee, it is a joint committee, with equal membership representing the FSA and UFV. It has three primary responsibilities: 1) to administer and allocate professional development funds (including sabbaticals and education leaves); 2) to formulate and review institution-wide policy, criteria and procedures for professional development; and 3) to identify resources for professional development. JPDC will also service as an advisory committee to the Learning and Development program within Human Resources, which coordinates UFV-wide PD opportunities.

A regular activity for the committee is reviewing professional development applications. Two subcommittees (often with members from outside the JPDC) undertake the work of reviewing faculty sabbatical proposals and staff education leaves; both of these subcommittees report regularly on the progress and results of their work to JPDC. For in-house professional develop-

ment applications, JPDC regularly reviews applications that have been denied by a supervisor, as well as appeals on those denials. A small sub-committee also reviews all applications and brings any issues or questions arising from the review to the full committee for discussion. JPDC also reviews all of the post-PD reports that are required of everyone who receives in-house professional development funds for activities and tuition support.

Over the year, the committee has worked on several projects:

- guidelines for allowable PD expenses (developing a consistent framework for PD expenses across the institution for things like travel and accommodation);
- group PD opportunities (developing a funding mechanism and identifying opportunities UFV-wide); and
- redesigning the post-PD report form.

The committee also has a few projects on the horizon, including workshops for supervisors who sign off on PD applications, and redesigning the web pages to make the PD application process easier to understand and provide resources to both employees applying for PD funds, and the supervisors who evaluate the requests.

As JPDC Co-chair, I am also a member of the Professional & Scholarly Development committee (PSDC) of the Federation of Post-Secondary Educators (FPSE). This committee met twice this past year, in November, and again in February at the FPSE Spring Leadership Workshop. As a new

member of the committee, I found the information-sharing to be of great value — learning about professional development procedures, issues, and concerns at other FPSE locals. The sharing also provides plenty of opportunity for questions and discussion, and it's interesting to note how many of the FPSE institutions struggle with the same issues.

In addition to information sharing, this committee completed two projects: revising and updating its Professional Development Comparison Chart, which compares PD funds, eligibility, policies and procedures across all FPSE locals; and creating an online repository of the locals' forms, guidelines, handbooks, and templates for professional development.

The committee is now focused on exploring educational technology and the concerns it raises from a professional development perspective; it is a companion piece to a discussion paper developed by FPSE's Education Policy committee.

Finally, my steepest learning curve this past year has been serving as a member of the bargaining team. This has been invigorating, challenging, and eye-opening work, and as I write this piece, it's not yet completed. But perhaps by the time you read this, there will be more news about the result.

I'm looking forward to what the next year will bring.

In solidarity,

Colleen





## Step on the Gas Already!

**Lisa Morry** | Communications Chair

It's time our FSA got started on social media. Although there are risks, I think we're being overly cautious, sort of like the little old lady who drives to McDonald's at 40 km during morning rush. Step on the gas already!

Plenty of unions like ours have social media accounts. The list includes Langara College Faculty Association (<https://www.facebook.com/lfaweb/>), Thompson Rivers University Faculty Association (<https://www.facebook.com/trufa.ca/>), Kwantlen Faculty Association (<https://www.facebook.com/YourKFA>), Emily Carr Faculty Association (<https://www.facebook.com/Emily-Carr-Faculty-Association-230132540366781/>), The Federation of Post Secondary Educators, the BC Federation of Labour, and the Canadian Labour Congress. CUPE is particularly prolific on social media, with locals having their own accounts on various platforms. Not everyone does social media well. There's plenty to know and more going on beneath the surface.

During winter semester I took an online social media marketing course from BCIT. Why BCIT? Scheduling hasn't allowed me to take a similar course at our institution for the last couple of years and it was time already. I necessarily ignored social media while I was working on my degree and I needed to catch up. I already had a personal Facebook page, which I only really started using when I went to the International Federation of Library Associations conference in Lyon, France, in summer 2014, and I wanted to share the conference and my travels with my colleagues. It was immensely successful experience sharing in real time like that.

During the marketing course I started a blog and a Twitter account, and had started an Instagram account just prior to the course. I still have a lot to learn and I'm disappointed the course didn't go over how to start and use social media and features of the different social media platforms. One of my classmates recommended another course that she said would cover the basics. The premise for that course, which focuses on storytelling, reminds me of what Terry O'Reilly said when he spoke here at UFV: "Compelling stories resound." My past experience as a reporter tells me that's true. People don't care about another boring rezoning until they hear how that affects their property, their neighbours, their traffic, their community.

My reasons for taking a social media course included initiating social media platforms for the FSA and learning more about social media for my job in the library. Since the FSA funded my online marketing course, it's only fair to report out to members. I learned that we are desperately behind in our social media presence. That is, the FSA doesn't have a social media presence. We have started Discourse and members have signed up, but we don't interact and engage outside of our membership. And that's important in our changing world. This course opened my eyes to the popularity, pervasiveness and power of social media marketing.

Our new colleagues are often younger and come to the university with social media in their blood. It's also important in working with the students in the library. They get it and I need to get it. I've learned a lot about different social media platforms, marketing campaigns, how to post, when to post, what to post, how to measure results and how to engage my audience, but I can learn even more.

I have used what I've learned in this course in my job, both in the library, where I contribute to our blog and our Facebook page, and hope to contribute to our other upcoming social media efforts, and also in my position on our union executive, where I've written a draft social media policy and worked to convince others that our union needs a Facebook page (at least) because other unions use social media to communicate and campaign.

This course has inspired me to continue learning about trends in social media. It's important to realize that new platforms emerge and platforms wax and wane in popularity. What appeals to people in my age group may not do much for my kids and what my kids engage in may not be what high-school students use. This course has also taught me that we need a social media marketing plan, we need to measure and evaluate the results of social media marketing, and make adjustments where necessary, and we have to keep up. There's always going to be something new.

To that end, the FSA communications committee has finally decided it's time for Facebook. We're refining our strategy, but it will launch soon. Be prepared to like us on Facebook.



## Two Years Passed by Quickly

**Laura Chomiak** | Staff Contract Administrator

It's hard to believe that two years have passed since I stood before you stating with confidence that I could be a powerful voice representing your best interests. I promised you honesty, discretion, and that I would do my utmost best for our membership.

I guess time flies when you are really passionate about the members you're serving, and the dedication you have to your job. The trust you instilled in me has resulted in success stories in winning grievances, harassment investigations and accommodations, in addition to aiding members through leaves and bumping, standing up for your rights with job duties, and being part of the bargaining team so your voice is heard.

This is only a small sample of what I've worked so very hard at to ensure you are looked after and our Collective Agreement is upheld. For that opportunity, I really want to thank you. Being dedicated to serving our membership has been the key determinant for me to put my name forward again to serve another two-year term. I would be honoured to have your support and vote to continue to represent you.



Over the last few months, I've been working diligently with the Contract committee, in caucus, and in bargaining to ensure your concerns over the unratified agreement and the identified staff gains are not overlooked. I've taken steps to

successfully handle sensitive issues with members of a department over harassment cases. I've addressed and resolved concerns over a lack of respect in a Selection Advisory committee process. I've assisted a member in Workers' Compensation Board-doctor meetings with a favourable outcome. I've had extensive meetings with a director and management over job descriptions and changes to shifts, which resulted in improved working conditions. I've assisted members with acquiring acting pay and job appointments. I'm working toward a best-case scenario with a long-term member whose position was cut last month. With the faculty contract administrator being successfully hired to a new position within the institution, I've taken on some of the workload to assist some faculty with their outstanding issues.

In March I attended a five-day harassment investigation program. The training involved real cases and covered the roles and responsibilities of the investigator. The program was incredibly beneficial, and I have been asked to teach what I've learned to ensure consistency within the process.

Thank you to our staff stewards and staff VP who have been invaluable during my term. Their vigilance in providing FSA representation whenever possible during our SACs and in bringing forward concerns and questions from our members to my attention have been instrumental in serving our membership.

If there is anything that I or your staff stewards or staff VP can do to assist you, please email or phone us.





## Easter Egg Hunt a Big Hit!

**Emily Major** | Social Committee Chair

### Well, that was Unexpected!

When Christina (Neigel) stopped by my office three weeks ago to suggest I throw an Easter egg hunt for the kids of staff and faculty, I thought I was being optimistic anticipating that a dozen kids would come.

I am so thrilled I was wrong! On March 24th, the old Aftermath was filled with kids from ages under one to ten, icing their Easter cookies, decorating their Easter bags, getting their faces painted, assembling their bunny ears, and getting ready for a big hunt out in the hay!

Overall, we had around 90 kids throughout the day, digging through hay in search of eggs, and they were able come in for a special prize. Although I spent the majority of the event replenishing popcorn and cleaning messes so I wasn't able to talk to many attendees, but I got the impression that people were overall really happy with the event. I am already looking forward to next year's event!

We had appearances from admin, staff, faculty, students, even the Easter Bunny himself! I want to extend a heartfelt thank you to my volunteers, as well as Martin Kelly, and Sheila McKay. The event would not have been such a success without their incredible support.

Thank you for those who attended, it was great to see so many faces from across departments.



## Elections, Collective Agreement and AGM the Current Big Issues

**Connie Cyrull** | Staff Vice President

By now we will all have had the opportunity to use the new software for voting online to elect our new faculty contract administrator. I used to use the old-fashioned method and go up to the FSA office to fill out a paper ballot, so I really like the new method, especially as it adds the bonus of being completely anonymous.

The AGM has now been scheduled and we have some key positions coming up for a new two-year term. The one that works the closest with my position is the staff contract administrator and during the past two years I have had the privilege of working with Laura Chomiak.

We who work at UFV have the rights that our Collective Agreement gives us and unless we bargain changes, that is our guideline. I, like a lot of you, have had ideas of what our rights should be, which makes what I am about to say seem out of character to those who know me. I have learned that we cannot expect any rights outside of the CA unless it comes under the B.C. Human Rights Code or WorkSafeBC.

Our contract administrator must abide by the Collective Agreement until someone misinterprets or is in clear violation of a particular article. Laura has been brilliant at this during the past two years and in my opinion, she has proven her ability to advocate for us in a respectful, yet determined approach that can and should be respected by us all. I will be supporting her bid for another term.

I also hope that you have been keeping up with John's bargaining updates as to the progress of negotiations with our employer. Clearly we are not done yet, but I encourage all of you to hold faith and to use the new Discourse program for passing along tidbits to the membership. We even have a contest that, if you are chosen, will make the signup well worth the effort.

See you all at the AGM.





## Nego-Bot: The Future of Contract Negotiations?

**Vicki Grieve** | Agreements Chair

Way back in the not-so-distant past, I was president of the FSA. During that time, I was approached by a salesman, who kept calling to ask if he could come and see me. He wanted to demonstrate a software package he was selling. He was vague on details about the nature of this software, which would apparently offer Tremendous Savings in time and resources and was poised to Fundamentally Change the nature of contract negotiations. Being already half-consumed by contract negotiations and short on time, I pressed him for more information. It turned out that the software was designed to take contract negotiations out of the hands of union and management negotiators altogether. Once fed the right kind of information — bargaining mandates, proposals and bottom lines from both sides — the software would work some kind of algorithmic magic and come up with a new contract, all in a matter of minutes. Hey presto and bobbity-bobbity-boo!

I thought the whole idea was hardly credible, and it was not something I wanted to invest any time into. I instead gave him FPSE's contact information, and suggested

that he would need to have its endorsement before I could even contemplate a demonstration of the software. But now I'm having second thoughts.

These second thoughts have been brought about by my realization of the huge expenditure of time and human resources that goes into contract negotiations. The FSA has now spent about nine months actively negotiating its expired contract. Last year's five-month stint resulted in a tentative agreement which was scrapped when the membership voted it down. This represented the work of five executive members and about six administrators. The current still-in-progress negotiations involve about the same number of people. While they are meeting for hours in various rooms, all kinds of other things are not getting done. This represents missed professional opportunities and huge personal stress. Meanwhile, for the membership at large, problems are not addressed, morale continues to decline and wages have not increased for years, despite the ever-expanding volume of work we are expected to accomplish.

In light of this, maybe allowing some form of technology to take over is not a bad idea after all. Dr. Richard Susskind, who recently delivered the 2016 Sir Graham Day Lecture in Ethics, Morality and The Law at Dalhousie University, claims that technology, aided by the fields of Artificial Intelligence and Data Analytics, will soon transform the work of professionals such as lawyers, doctors and teachers, if not take it over all together. (Susskind's lecture can be accessed at <http://www.cbc.ca/radio/ideas/replacing-the-professionals-richard-susskind-1.3542846>.) It doesn't seem much of a leap then to believe that public sector contract negotiations could be accomplished through a software program or a robot. It might get us a fair and fast settlement. Maybe a negotiating robot (Nego-bot for short) is just be what we need.



## Successful International Women's Day Event

**Teresa Piper** | Status of Women Rep

We need to open our eyes and see all the levels of sexism and discrimination against women, especially aboriginal women, women of colour, and women with disabilities. Women in society in general are not heard or respected because their ideas are not as valued as those of men or of the few women in positions of power and authority. Here on our doorstep:

- Aboriginal women have gone missing and murdered.
- Women have been shot to death in the streets.
- Shelters have reached their capacity to provide safe haven to women fleeing with their children to escape from domestic abuse.
- Of all the women murdered in the United States and Canada, about a third are killed by a husband or boyfriend. A leading cause of death for pregnant women is being murdered by a partner.
- Government and its institutions turn a blind eye to women's issues and struggles.
- Women around the world are still being raped, trafficked, violated and discriminated against.
- In the US, "One of the main issues of women discrimination today is unequal pay. If a man is paid \$1, a woman with the same job will get only \$0.77, an African American woman will get \$0.68, and a Latina woman would receive \$0.58."

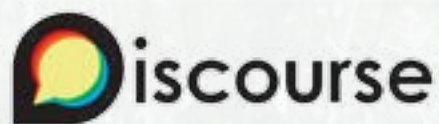
Women face an epidemic of sexism and abuse of authority in the world. It is an issue of women's rights when women feel oppressed and afraid of speaking out about the harassment and discrimination they face for fear of being laughed at, or not being listened to, or losing their jobs.

(Excerpted from <http://goo.gl/YemqHh>)



Photos courtesy of UFV's Communications, Marketing and Student Recruitment department





## We have a prize for signing up for Discourse

As an incentive to continue the great discussions on Discourse, we're offering a \$100 restaurant gift certificate to one FSA employee who has signed up for Discourse by noon on April 27. Names will be put into a random number generator and we'll draw the winner at the AGM on Thursday, April 28. You don't have to attend the AGM to win (we hope you will attend), but you do need to sign up for Discourse by the deadline.

Discourse is an alternative communication tool that allows all FSA members to talk to each other in a new medium. Sign up with your UFV email address here: <http://forum.ufv-fsa.ca/>

New discussions are taking place in a number of categories, including voting in FSA election procedures, bargaining and the faculty contract administrator election. Take a look to see what your fellow members are saying and contribute to the discussions, start new topics or ask questions.

For an introduction, see these Discourse basics: <https://meta.discourse.org/t/discourse-basics/39104>. For a mostly generic video, see this: <https://air.mozilla.org/how-to-use-mozilla-discourse/>. Please remember to use only your UFV email to sign up. New user accounts will be monitored and verified.

## SEND US A LETTER OR AN ARTICLE

Letters and articles must contain the author's name, address and a daytime telephone number. Maximum length is 200 words; shorter is better. We reserve the right to edit, condense or reject any contribution. Writers whose work is being considered for publication will be contacted.

## FSA CONTACTS 2015- 2016

### Executive

President	Sean Parkinson	4584
Faculty Vice-President	Christina Neigel	4558
Staff Vice-President	Connie Cyrull	4214
Faculty Contract Administrator	Kim Nickel	4102
Staff Contract Administrator	Laura Chomiak	4593
Chief Negotiator	John Carroll	4148
Secretary/Treasurer	Michael Maschek	4135
Communications Chair	Lisa Morry	2471
Agreements Chair	Vicki Grieve	2439
JCAC Co-Chair	Gayle Noel	4093
JPDC Co-Chair	Colleen Bell	4396
OH&S Co-Chair	Noham Weinberg	4493
Social Committee Chair	Emily Major	4055
FPSE Rep. Status of Women	Teresa Piper	4061
FPSE Rep. Human Rights	Rajnish Dhawan	4784
FPSE Rep. Non-Regular Employees	Clare Dale	4389

### Local

### Faculty Stewards

Faculty of Arts	Bosu Seo	4818
Faculty of Applied & Technical Studies	Vacant	
Academic Support Faculty	Colleen Bell	4396
Faculty of Access & Continuing Education	Julia Dodge	2553
Faculty of Health Sciences	Debbie Wheeler	8198
Faculty of Professional Studies	Vacant	
Faculty of Science	Vacant	

### Local

### Staff Stewards

Staff - Abbotsford & Mission	Martin Kelly	2509
Staff - CEP / TTC	Shelley Chute	4006
Staff - Member at Large	Heather Compeau	4096
Staff - Member at Large	Kulwant Gill	4578
Staff - Member at Large	Neil Webb	4205

### Office Administration

Member Services & Procedures	Tanja Rourke	4530
Finance	Harman Dhaliwal	4475

### Local